

June 5, 2003

Mr. Dennis Salter  
Placer County Planning Department  
11414 B Avenue  
Auburn, CA 95603

**Subject: Rare Plant Surveys  
DeWitt Center**

Dear Mr. Salter:

General vegetation and wildlife surveys were made of the DeWitt Center property in March 2002. These surveys determined that portions of the DeWitt Center support habitat for several of the 21 special status plant species shown in the enclosed Table 1 developed for the DeWitt Center EIR. For various reasons, none of the species in Table 1 has a high probability of occurring on the DeWitt property. Nevertheless, some species cannot be eliminated as occurring on the site without further surveys. Those species most likely to occur are Sanford's arrowhead, big-scale balsam-root, and Brandegee's clarkia.

### **Methods**

I conducted two special status plant surveys in 2003: one on April 18 and the second on May 30. The surveys were conducted floristically according to the guidelines for rare plant surveys established by the California Native Plant Society and the California Department of Fish and Game. Floristic surveys require that the surveyor conduct the surveys during the times when special status plants can be identified, typically during the blooming periods. During floristic surveys, the surveyor identifies each plant species observed to the extent necessary to determine whether it is a special status species. The purpose of floristic surveys is to ensure that unexpected special status species (those not included on Table 1) are not overlooked because the surveyor was focused on a small suite of species. During my surveys, I kept a running list of all species seen, and the complete list is enclosed with this letter as Table 2. (Note that Table 2 does not contain many of the landscape plants occurring around DeWitt Center buildings.) Species that I could not identify in the field were collected, pressed, dried, and identified. I also collected some species to serve as vouchers. Pressed specimens are available for inspection in the North Fork Associates herbarium.

Except for highly developed and landscaped areas, most of the DeWitt property was surveyed. However, I focused particular attention on those areas that have been identified for future development, even though they are for the most part highly disturbed.

Although my surveys were floristic, I timed my surveys to ensure that I would be on the property when the three most likely species would be identifiable. Big-scale balsam-root is a perennial that would be evident during much of the year. Brandegees clarkia, however, is an annual that blooms late in the spring. Clarkias are very difficult, if not impossible, to identify without flowers. Consequently, I timed the surveys so that they would cover the clarkia blooming period. Sanford's arrowhead blooms from late spring through the summer and would have been identifiable during my May survey.

## Results

The majority of the DeWitt Center property has been disturbed by various activities over a number of years. Much of it has been developed with landscape plants around buildings and other facilities. The only relatively natural areas are oak woodland located in the western portion of the property, and this area has the highest number of native species on the entire site. If special status plants were to occur at DeWitt Center, the most likely locations would be in the oak woodland.

Some of the area scheduled for development have been greatly disturbed and support ruderal vegetation. Ruderal areas are highly unlikely to support special status species because these species usually do not tolerate high levels of disturbance and the associated competition from highly aggressive ruderal species. Even so, these areas were thoroughly surveyed because they are future development sites.

During my surveys, I found no special status plant species occurring on the DeWitt property. The following bullets are a summary of species that are similar or related to special status species in the enclosed Table 1.

- No members of the genus *Sagittaria* were observed in the ponds on the site.
- No members of the genus *Balsamorhiza* were observed, although the similar and related *Wyethia angustifolia* occurs in the oak woodland. This is common species in the Sierra foothills.
- *Calystegia occidentalis* occurs in the woodland and some of the surrounding grassland. This is a common member of the morning-glory family related to a serpentine endemic found in El Dorado and Nevada Counties.
- Manzanita is not common on the DeWitt property, but *Arctostaphylos viscida* (a common species) does occur in the oak woodland.
- *Chlorogalum pomeridianum* (a common species) grows in and around the oak woodland. This species is readily distinguished from the rare *C. grandiflorum*.
- No members of the genus *Fritillaria* were observed.
- Two common members of the genus *Clarkia* are present on the property: *Clarkia purpurea* subsp. *quadrivulnera* and *Clarkia unguiculata*.

Mr. Dennis Salter  
June 5, 2003

Page 3

My surveys were conducted over a period of time sufficient to find any of the species in Table 1 that could occur on the property. In my opinion, no further special status plant surveys are necessary. If you have questions or need more information, please call me at (530) 887-8500.

Sincerely,

Barry Anderson  
Senior Biologist

enclosures: Table 1, Special Status Species Occurring in the Region Around the DeWitt Center  
Table 2, Plant Species Occurring on the DeWitt Center Property